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ABSTRACT

This document is Chancellor Thomas Nussbaum's speech at the fall 2000 California Community Colleges (CCC) Leadership Conference. He states that CCC is united in its commitment to open access--that every student who has the capacity and motivation to benefit from educational programs will have access to colleges. As part of the 2005 Strategic Response, CCC committed to increase access to the system by more than 550,000 students during the decade of 1995-2005. To address this commitment, CCC agreed upon three strategies: (1) to annually seek funding for a 4% increase in enrollment; (2) to move to year-round operations; and (3) to secure $500 million per year for capital outlay needs. CCC is also committed to secure adequate funding for its colleges. At minimum, by 2005, CCC funding per student should be within $1,500 of the national community college average in funding per full-time student. CCC's efforts during the past five years--particularly the effort on the 2000-2001 budget--have produced some very impressive benefits. CCC has secured five of the best budget increases in the history of the system. (JA)

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The State of California Community Colleges

Fall Leadership Conference

September 28, 2000

Chancellor Thomas J. Nussbaum

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The State of the California Community Colleges
Fall Leadership Conference, September 28, 2000
Chancellor Thomas J. Nussbaum

Introduction

Honorable members of the Board of Governors and local trustees, fellow chief executive officers, esteemed members of the Consultation Council, dedicated staff of the Chancellor's Office, and special guests, as I stand before you tonight to address the state of the California Community Colleges, I want you to know that you are my heroes. Collectively, you have opened the doors of access and lifted the quality of community college education in California. Your work and your dedication have everything to do with the many successes we celebrate tonight. And so, as I begin, I want to take a few moments to acknowledge your special contributions.

First, to my faculty colleagues, we all know that when we ask our students what makes the difference for them at community colleges, they uniformly cite the quality and dedication of the faculty. You're simply the best-50,000 miracle workers. You provide excellent instruction, nurture self-esteem, create a sense of direction, and instill the courage to accept challenges. You shape complete humans-thousands and thousands a year just like De Tran, who is now the Editor of the Viet Mercury Newspaper in San Jose:

> "I grew up at Foothill College. I was an immigrant kid, straight out of high school and didn't have a lot of confidence. It's a beautiful campus and the teachers help create a supportive, nurturing environment. My classes bolstered my language skills and I found a sense of place and self-confidence in my abilities. Foothill's faculty is first rate. They made a lasting impression on me. I still think about the English, economics and history lessons they presented. My teachers really showed me there is nothing too big that you cannot do."

Please join me in recognizing the incredible work of our faculty.

And now, to my fellow CEO's and administrators, you are among the most resourceful and dedicated people I know. Your near-impossible task is to ensure a first-rate education with an operating budget that is about 70 cents on the dollar as compared with the national average. Your days are filled with tough decisions and hard compromises that funding limitations force upon you. Despite this, you love your jobs because you see the difference your colleges are making in the lives of students and the vitality of your communities. Given the funding limitations, no one could blame you for exclusively advocating the needs of your particular colleges and districts. To your credit, however, you have recognized the need to consider the welfare of the other districts and the system as a whole. Please join me in recognizing the work of our CEO's and administrators.

To the classified employees-all 22,000 of you-let me just say that you are the glue that

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holds our institutions together. You are our unsung heroes. You are often the first people our students encounter; but you also toil behind the scenes to do all the work essential to delivering a high-quality educational experience. You keep the phones answered, the students admitted and registered, the files current, the computers on line, the classrooms clean and comfortable, the lawns mowed, the cafeterias and bookstores running, and the campus attractive and secure. Please join me in recognizing the classified employees, our unsung heroes who contribute so much to student success.

To the trustees of our local governing boards-and particularly to the executive board of CCCT-thank you for your ever-improving partnership with the Board of Governors. Increasingly, you have recognized that your role of service and stewardship extends not only to your communities, but also to the system. In return, I know that we at the system level have increasingly recognized that broadly-empowered local governing boards are an essential component to the delivery of quality education. Local trustees, we salute you.

To the Board of Governors, you have done a masterful job in guiding this incredibly diverse system. You have displayed great judgment in balancing the need for local authority and control while at the same time assuring that system and State needs are addressed. During the past five years, you have led the system to five of its largest budget augmentations ever. You are a Board that wants to look to the future, a Board that will chart the direction of our colleges. I am proud to be your Chancellor, and to serve you in leading the re-emergence of the California Community Colleges as the nation's premiere system of community colleges. Please join me in thanking the Board of Governors for its masterful leadership.

To my staff, let me just say that you have gone through walls for our students and our colleges. Despite crippling reductions to our agency budget, a plethora of nay-saying control agencies, and a relentless workload, your spirit has not been broken. Instead, you've worked the extra hours, accepted the additional stress, and raised your professional standards in serving our colleges and our students. Over the past four or five years, you have lifted the level of competence in the Chancellor's Office, and you have earned the respect of our Board and your colleagues in the colleges. Chancellor's staff, we salute you.

And, finally, to the students, you're what it's all about-all 1.6 million of you. Your are the faces and the future of California. You are the high school valedictorian, the high school dropout, and everything in between. You are in your teens, your twenties, your thirties, your forties, and beyond. You're looking to transfer, you're preparing for a career, you're seeking better job, you're seeking basic skills, and you're aspiring to be a better person. Most of you balance jobs, relationships, families, and limited finances in making the decision to attend. Many of you have fought "against the odds" to pursue your education. You are courageous for overcoming these obstacles. Your dreams inspire us to serve you. Students, we salute you, and may we never let you down!

Our Special Kinship with Our Students

And so here we are tonight, heroes all in our contributions to quality community college education. Collectively, our efforts produce nothing less than magic transformations

in the lives of our students. We work this magic on a shoestring-by being incredibly resourceful and having a "can do" attitude. In my view, there is not an institution in California that is more about hope. There is not an institution in California that is more about caring. There is not an institution in California that is more human. I know this because it is we, the people who work in and for the community colleges, who make it this way. If you look at us you'll see that we are down-to-earth and egalitarian. Very little has been handed to us in life. Like our students, many of us have had to overcome obstacles along the way. It's because of these backgrounds and belief structures that we feel a special affinity to our students. It is a special kinship rooted in a deep and personal commitment to social justice.

Being who we are, the pervasive culture of our colleges is to discover and nurture human potential. No one does this better than us. We take our students from where they are and move them forward. We have the unique ability to uncover hidden potential, even if masked by self-doubt, low self-esteem, or a poor primary or secondary education. While other colleges and universities toss aside students without proven ability, we take these students in and begin to unlock their potential. You've heard hundreds of such stories, but let me share just one, the words of a young Latina:

> "During my first semester at Santa Barbara City College . . . my classes included aerobics, typing, and remedial math. . . Without the opportunity to study at my local community college, I probably wouldn't have gone to college at all. My high school grades would have sufficed to get me into a decent university, but I didn't consider myself college material. After all, none of my six brothers and sisters had attended college, and most didn't even finish high school. My parents have the equivalent of a second grade education, Mexican immigrants who do not speak English; my mother worked as a maid and my father as a dishwasher."
>
> "But enrolling in a community college was one of the smartest decisions I ever made. Despite my slow start, I learned the skills I needed to move ahead academically. . . I also began to explore educational alternatives. And transferring to a reputable four-year university became my most important goal."

My friends, the young woman who wrote these words is with us tonight. A few years ago, this seventh child of immigrant parents having a second grade education inauspiciously began her higher education at Santa Barbara City College. Here she found the nurturing environment that enabled her to grow both academically and as a person. She joins us this evening as a recent *magna cum laude* graduate of Harvard University. Let us all welcome and honor Cynthia Inda!

Transforming the lives of students is what we're about. When all is said and done, it is all about successfully educating the Cynthia Inda's and all of the other millions of

students who come to our doors. These students deserve the best-not simply the best education that 70 cents on the dollar can buy. And it's up to us to convince the Governor and the Legislature that it's time to invest in our students.

Our Special Kinship with One Another

It's ironic: while we have always had a special affinity and commitment to our students, we're only just beginning to realize that we also have a special affinity and commitment to one another. The long-established culture of our system has been for each district, each organization, and each constituency to pursue its own agenda. In this milieu, our natural inclination has been to view one another as competitors for resources and authority. Hard decisions must be made in resource-starved environments, and this too has challenged our willingness to trust and work with one another.

During the last few years, we have taken giant strides to recognize and build upon the common bonds and commitments we share with one another. Somehow, we've recognized that we'll serve our students better if we work together. This is so because we have tapped into the common interests that unite us. Though we work for different districts and different organizations, and though we perform different roles, we are all fellow workers and policymakers involved in providing community college education in this State. We share a strong bond with our students and a commitment to the community college mission. We are all laboring heroically to perform our respective jobs. And, we are mutually dependent upon one another in our effort to lift the overall excellence of our institutions. We work together not only to successfully educate our students, but also to secure funding for our colleges and establish policy for the system.

Last year, all of us made the unprecedented commitment to redouble our efforts on the budget. We fell short last September and November, but we rolled up our sleeves and began again in January. We persevered to resolve issues that had formerly divided us. We fashioned a package that all districts, all organizations, and the Board of Governors could support. We went shoulder to shoulder to advocate the package to the Legislature and the Governor. In this, our maiden voyage in working together in unity, we secured the largest-the largest by far-budget augmentation in the history of our colleges. With a $500 million increase in ongoing funds, and over $100 million in one-time funds, we more than doubled the 1999-2000 augmentation.

My friends, let us recognize that this very successful effort on the budget is only the beginning. We have the opportunity to further transform the way we interact in pursuing the common ends of serving our students. Put simply, I believe we can unite not only in developing and advocating the system budget, but also on a number of fundamental values that define what we're about and where we're going as a system. Two or three years ago we could only pay lip service to such a possibility. Tonight, I believe we are ready to take unity of action to a new level-to recognize and act upon the fact that we share a number fundamental values that can guide our collective actions during the coming year. Doing so will define and strengthen our commitment to one another, enabling us to become even stronger allies in a common cause. More important, our concerted action will be a powerful force to improve the quality of community college education. This is the greatest service we could ever provide our students, our

communities, and the State.

Unity on Fundamental Values

I share with you nine fundamental values that unite us.

1. We are united in our commitment to open access-that every student who has the capacity and motivation to benefit from our programs will have access to our colleges-and we support the access goals of the 2005 Strategic Response.

Our belief in open access is fundamental, and is rooted in the knowledge that community colleges hold not only the key to success for millions of our citizens, but also to a workforce prepared to compete in a global economy, and the key to an educated citizenry that serves as the basis for a strong multicultural democracy. As part of the *2005 Strategic Response*, we committed to increase access to the system by over 550,000 students during the decade of 1995-2005. We made this commitment not only to restore a 180,000 student loss of access that occurred during the recession, but also to meet the demands of "Tidal Wave II"-the baby boom echo of new students projected to come to our colleges. To address this commitment, we agreed upon three strategies: 1) to annually seek funding for a 4% increase in enrollment; 2) to move to year-round operations; and 3) to secure $500 million per year for capital outlay needs.

Colleagues, our commitment to open access has produced three incredible results. First, since the fall of 1995, we have increased access to our colleges by 260,000 students-from 1,336,000 students in the fall of 1995, to 1,596,000 this fall. Believe it or not, this increase of 260,000 students is approximately twice the entire undergraduate enrollment of the University of California. Second, we have made significant progress in moving to year-round operations. The average number of days of instruction for our 108 colleges has increased from 271 days per year in 1996-97 to 300 days for the current year. No system of higher education uses its facilities more than we do. Finally, in 1998, we helped secure passage of Proposition 1A, a four-year state capital outlay bond that has provided us with an average of $200 million per year in funding; and this year we were successful in securing $100 million for facilities modernization.

Clearly, our progress on access goals wouldn't be possible without help from the Legislature and the Governor. While many legislators and Governor Davis have stepped to the plate on our behalf, there is one member of the Legislature who has been our "champion of champions" on access and capital outlay issues. He has seen to it that our colleges receive funding for increased enrollments, he has played a key role in shaping the state's capital outlay bonds, and he has been the Legislature's most passionate spokesperson for majority vote local capital outlay bonds. He is a great friend to community colleges, he joins us here tonight, and it gives me great pleasure to recognize Senator Jack O'Connell!

As we begin the academic year, we should focus our commitment to access on three objectives. First, in just over a month's time, we will have the opportunity to pass Proposition 39, the 55% majority vote initiative for local capital outlay bonds. This is one

we must win, because we are rapidly exhausting the capacity of our facilities to accommodate additional enrollments. Second, as part of the 2001-2002 system budget request, we should again seek funding for a 4% increase in enrollments, and we should again seek $100 million in one-time funds for facilities modernization. And, finally, we must work cooperatively with the other public education segments, as well as the Legislature and the Governor, to develop the next state-funded capital outlay bond. Much of this work must be done next year, so that we can have a ballot proposition before the people in 2002.

2. We are united in our commitment to student success-that our students will succeed in their educational endeavors, and that race, ethnic background, gender or disability status will no longer visit disproportionate results.

Access without a real opportunity for success is an empty promise. As I have described earlier, there is no question that all of us within the system share a profound commitment to student success. Our difficulty is that years of pervasive underfunding have limited our ability to make the kinds of improvements that we know are needed. In the words of a colleague, we are "threadbare" institutions, whose employees are working to the point of "embattled exhaustion" to fulfill a passionate commitment to the hopes and dreams of our students.

In 1997 and 1998, we took the complex and controversial step of proposing the Partnership for Excellence as a means of securing funds to enable improvements in student success. Recognizing that the State had been unresponsive to our call for discretionary revenue to make up for prior underfunding, we proposed instead to improve the performance of our colleges in return for a substantial infusion of resources. We were the first public education segment in California to step forward with such a proposal. It was a difficult gestation, one that would not have occurred without incredible give and take by many of you who are here tonight. In the summer of 1998, the program was enacted into law, and we were provided the first $100 million of Partnership funds. Since 1999, we have worked with Governor Davis to secure his support for the program. We have also worked in Consultation to fulfill a statutory obligation to develop the "contingent funding allocation options" and the "criteria that would require the implementation of these options." We have worked internally to improve the implementation and accountability of the program. Consequently, as part of our unity efforts on the 2000-2001 budget, we were able to bring the funding for the Partnership for Excellence to $300 million. This translates to a $300 increase in funding per student, the largest-ever increase for student success improvements in the history of our system.

As we approach the coming year, we have much on the line with the Partnership for Excellence. By November, the Board of Governors must formally adopt the contingent funding allocation options and the criteria that would require their implementation. Next spring, we must report to the Legislature on the outcomes for the first two years of the program. Also, the Board must apply the criteria to determine whether performance has been satisfactory or less than satisfactory, and determine whether or not to implement a contingent funding option. In addition, my office will oversee the program to assure districts comply with the Board's recently adopted conditions that assure the funds are spent on student learning and success. Finally, as we take these sensitive and

potentially difficult steps, we must remain unified in seeking the next $100 million installment of Partnership funds in the 2001-2002 budget.

In talking about our commitment to student success, let me emphasize that this commitment is not exclusively related to the Partnership for Excellence. As successful as this program has been, it does not measure all of the critical outcomes inherent within our mission. For instance, it doesn't measure the extent to which we improve the critical thinking abilities of our students; it doesn't measure the extent to which we provide our students with the ability to work creatively with individuals from a multitude of races and ethnic, religious, and cultural histories; and it doesn't measure the extent to which we prepare our students to be citizens who will vote, contribute to their communities, and help maintain our democracy. Our yardstick for measuring student success must never be restricted to the Partnership for Excellence. Nor can we ever ignore the need to improve the funding of other systemwide categorical programs that are so critical to student success.

3. We are united in our commitment to secure adequate funding for our colleges-at minimum, by 2005, our funding per student should be within $1,500 of the community college national average in funding per full-time student.

As a part of the *2005 Strategic Response*, we established a goal to bring our funding per student to within $1,500 of the national average for community colleges. At $3,536 per FTES in 1995-96, we were $2,500 below the national average for that year. In essence, we were funded at about 60 cents on the dollar as compared with the national average. Given available data, we estimated we would need to be funded at $6,500 per FTES in 2005. Achieving this goal will require the State to provide us with overall funding increases averaging 10% per year over the period of the decade. Nothing even close to this has ever been provided for any ten-year period in our history. On the other hand, the goal is both modest and reasonable. In essence, over the period of the decade, we're simply asking that our funding be increased from about 60 cents on the dollar as compared with the national average, to about 80 or 85 cents on the dollar.

My friends, our efforts during the past five years-and particularly the unity effort on the 2000-2001 budget-have produced some very impressive progress. We have secured five of the best budget increases in the history of the system. Our funding per student has increased from $3,536 per FTES to $4,796 per FTES-a $1,260 increase in funding per student. There's never been a comparable period in our history that we have achieved this kind of increase.

As successful as we have been, we need an even greater investment from the Governor and the Legislature if we are to reach our modest and reasonable funding goal. With just four funding cycles left between now and 2005, we need to secure an additional $1,800 per student. Given the continued strong economy, and given that community colleges have not been receiving their statutory share of Proposition 98 funds, the time is right for the Governor and the Legislature to make a major investment. Our students deserve an education that is funded to at least 85 cents on the dollar as compared with the national average. The system's request for an additional $750 million in ongoing funds for 2001-2002 is a reasonable and appropriate step in this direction,

and we are united in requesting this amount.

As we go forward this year, we should all commit to achieve and maintain unity on the budget package. Let us commit to work in Consultation and with the Board of Governors to put the final touches on a few remaining proposals that are not yet fully developed. As a means of further strengthening unity, we should also review the overall community college funding formula. It has been more than a decade since Program-Based Funding was adopted, and much has changed. By examining the funding formula, we will have a means of analyzing the internal distribution of resources within the system. As we address inequities, we will strengthen unity. In addition, because we use the funding formulas to substantiate the level of revenue requested to operate the system, a better funding formula will help us in presenting our annual budget to the Governor and the Legislature.

4. We are united in our commitment to rebuild and strengthen the quality and diversity of our human resources because we share: the commitment to faculty and staff diversity, the commitment to address full-time and part-time faculty issues, the commitment to improve compensation, the commitment to meet the massive hiring needs of the decade, and the commitment to secure funding for staff and leadership development.

In last year's State of the System address, I described how severe underfunding during the 1990's forced us to neglect our human resources infrastructure and slow our quest for diversity. I called upon us to rebuild and strengthen the quality and diversity of our human resources, noting that we shared strong common interests that could bring us to unity, including: a common interest in diversifying our workforce, a common interest in adequate compensation for all of our staff, a common interest in improving the percentage of instruction taught by full-time faculty, a common interest in preparing for the massive hiring of new staff that will occur in the next ten years, and a common interest in our employees having ample staff and leadership development opportunities. In the ensuing months, we developed the "Human Resources Infrastructure Proposal" which, together with our budget proposal on diversity, addressed all of these common interests. While we did not succeed in securing funding for these proposals, our unity and strength of resolve has not waned. We *will* find a way to fund these needs.

As we enter the new year, I believe we are united in the will to address five major human resource needs: a) we should accelerate our efforts to achieve faculty and staff diversity; b) we should continue to address full-time/part-time faculty issues; c) we should seek to improve the compensation of all staff; d) we should take steps to meet the massive hiring needs for faculty and staff that will occur between now and 2010; and e) we should enable and fund staff development programs, and especially a program for leadership development.

Rather than describe each of these initiatives separately, it makes better sense to discuss them together, as a holistic approach to strengthening the quality and diversity of our staff. For instance, we know that in order to meet our goals for diversity, we must do more than the kind of recruitment, selection, and screening we've done the past decade or so. While we've made significant progress in achieving better gender

balance, we've only made modest progress in diversifying the racial and ethnic makeup of our faculty and staff. In order to secure a pool of talent that is more deep and diverse, we need to make all of our staff positions more attractive in terms of compensation. In particular, we need to make part-time faculty positions more attractive, knowing that this is the pool of talent from which many full-time faculty are drawn. In addition, to secure the massive numbers of faculty and staff that will be needed, we must do more to encourage and enable our students to become tomorrow's faculty and staff of the colleges. Just as we have done with the Governor's initiative to stimulate the interest of our students in K-12 teaching positions, we need to create a "pipeline" to community college professions. Because our students are diverse, our efforts to establish this pipeline will contribute to our goals for diversity. Finally, enabling and funding staff development programs, and particularly a leadership development program, will provide our employees with the support necessary to do their jobs effectively, thus reducing turnover and burnout. If we design and structure our initiatives carefully, each will contribute to the other.

During the last three years, we have hired more full-time instructors than any other time in our history. This trend needs to continue, and we will soon have district plans in place to guide this progress. For 2001-2002, we are also expanding the requested cost of living adjustment and proposing $75 million to support and upgrade our part-time faculty- including funds to assure our students have access to these instructors. We are also proposing $25 million in funding to expand faculty and staff development programs, as well as faculty and staff diversity programs. Finally, through the fine work of the Community College Leadership Development Initiative, we are on the threshold of reinvigorating the role of our higher education partners in supporting and developing community college leaders.

While all of these initiatives are both critical and promising, I must admit that I keep coming back to our students as one of the most exciting and promising resources for improving the quality and diversity of our faculty and staff. As our students are transformed by their community college experiences, time and time again they turn out to be exactly who we are looking for. Consider the words of Malcolm Harvey, a student who escaped a life in Los Angeles gangs:

"I knew education was the only means to avoid the old neighborhood and its brutal gang violence, illicit drugs, and disadvantagement. I enrolled . . . with the goal of completing basic skills courses. After success in these, I enrolled in more difficult courses and changed my goal to that of earning an MBA. I wanted to make lots of money-a life in poverty promotes that mindset. But in the course of my studies, I experienced an epiphany. Because of the superb instruction I received . . . I decided that I wanted to become a college professor. To me, education is much more than scholarship and academics, It's about validation and lifting the human spirit."

Who better to nurture hope and help others succeed than our students? They are the faces of California and they will make excellent educators. It's up to us to pave the way.

5. We are united in our commitment to improve the flow of our students to the four-year colleges and universities.

The transfer function is a critical mission of our colleges, and we have initiated a host of policies and programs to improve this function. Through the Partnership for Excellence, we've made the commitment to increase the number of transfers by 33% by 2005. I've signed system-level MOU's with UC, CSU, and the independent colleges to expand transfer admission agreements, expand dual admission programs, provide better financial aid packaging, and set up joint working committees. We've adopted joint policy establishing a general education transfer core curriculum; and we've initiated a host of joint projects, including, CAN, C-CAN, ASSIST, and IMPAC. And all this effort at the system level doesn't begin to describe all the work that you in the colleges have done been to improve articulation and transfer at the college to college level. I don't think there's ever been a period where the local colleges, my office, and the other systems and their colleges have worked harder to increase the numbers and the successful flow of students to the four year colleges.

It is very significant, but not surprising that my colleague UC President Richard Atkinson just last week asked the UC Academic Council to consider a dual admission program that would enable greater numbers of high school graduates to attend UC by going first to a community college. President Atkinson would never have made this proposal if he didn't have full confidence in the quality of students we are transferring to the University.

Despite all these promising efforts, we have struggled to increase the numbers of community college students transferring to UC, CSU, and the independent colleges. Policymakers at all levels will want to know why, and it is up to us to discern the reasons and address the problems. As we continue all of our initiatives, we will work with our colleagues in the other segments to share information and analysis, and we will have study sessions both in Consultation and with the Board of Governors.

6. We are united in our commitment to strengthen the role community colleges play in workforce preparation and economic development.

The role our community colleges play in workforce preparation and economic development is, sadly, our best-kept secret. In reality, the colleges are the State's largest workforce preparation provider of *technically skilled positions in well-established occupations*, including: administration of justice, nursing, fire science, medical assisting, dental hygiene, computer and data processing, automotive technology, aviation maintenance, culinary arts, apprenticeable trades, and hospitality management. We are also one of the State's largest workforce preparation providers for *technically skilled positions in the new economy*, including: digital systems, multimedia, entertainment, advanced transportation technology, biotechnology, and geographic information systems. Our dilemma is that we don't adequately communicate what we do as a system. Individual districts work well with employers and can tout many cutting-edge programs, but we haven't yet compiled and described the cumulative efforts of the system. Without this broader context, our more focused community college economic development program is still not well understood by legislators or the Governor.

Compounding the problem that our roles in workforce preparation and economic development are not well understood, we also carry out these roles as part of very complex array of workforce preparation providers in the State. With the adoption of the

federal Workforce Investment Act, the coordination of this work falls to state and local workforce investment boards. Unfortunately, California's implementation of the law is tending toward very bureaucratic and inflexible structures both at the local and state levels. Some of our colleges are finding it difficult or impossible to participate.

During the coming year, I see two important tasks. First, it's critical that we ourselves better understand the cumulative efforts of our colleges in workforce preparation and economic development. And, second, it's also critical that we tell our story better. To that end, I have asked my staff to compile and depict the efforts of the 72 districts on workforce preparation and economic development. In my view, this kind of information, properly compiled, will portray the enormous role our colleges play in preparing the State's workforce and strengthening the economy. The information will also be useful to the State Workforce Investment Board and the Board of Governors, as they carry out their respective responsibilities. As we compile this information, we will work collaboratively with those involved with the systemwide public information campaign. This will assure that the information is effectively conveyed to policy makers, the media, and the general public.

7. We are united in our commitment to infuse technology into our colleges.

As part of the 2005 Strategic Response, we committed to develop a "Technology II Plan" for the system, recognizing the explosive use of the Internet, the "Digital Divide", the necessity for integration of the new technology into teaching and learning, and the impact of Tidal Wave II on the demand for access. We are using technology to enable students to be successful in their academic careers, as citizens, and as workers in a knowledge-based society.

Earlier this month, the Board of Governors adopted-at long last, I might add-the, "Technology II Strategic Plan 2000-2005." This plan will serve to guide our resource requests from the State during the next several years. In addition, it will enable the infusion of technology to occur in an orderly and coordinated manner. The "Tech II Plan" is a solid document, and I wish to commend the cast of thousands who contributed their blood, sweat, and tears in bringing it to fruition. Thank you!

8. We are united in our commitment to tell our story better-in particular by establishing a systemwide public awareness and marketing campaign for the community colleges.

We've long understood that we need to tell our story better. For over two years we've struggled with limited funding to develop and launch a systemwide public information campaign. Now, thanks to some very good work from our Systemwide Marketing Task Force, the information campaign is underway. Its purpose is to inform, in effective and memorable ways, and motivate to action, the public, the media, and policy makers concerning the unique value of community colleges, the importance of access and high quality programs, and the level of fiscal support necessary to operate the colleges.

You saw and heard more about the campaign in today's break-out sessions, but there

are three aspects I'm especially excited about: First, I see great potential in developing a program for successful community college students to be used as our "Champions for Community Colleges." I quoted from a number of champions tonight, and there are scores more just like them. It is important that our legislators, newspaper editors and others meet and talk with these students, and I think we should launch at least a piece this initiative immediately. Second, I view the public information campaign as an excellent vehicle to reinforce our efforts to secure adequate funding for the colleges. And, third, as I mentioned earlier, the public information campaign should play a major role in communicating the cutting-edge role community colleges play in workforce preparation and economic development.

9. We are united in our commitment to plan for the longer term future of the community colleges-in particular by rewriting or revising the New Basic Agenda, and by participating in the Legislature's review of public education.

We all recognize that long-term planning is essential to improving student success and enabling the community colleges to be a more effective system of higher education. The current version of the "New Basic Agenda" was adopted in 1996, and we all know that much has changed since then. In addition, the *2005 Strategic Response* only extends its vision about four more years. Finally, knowing that the Legislature is formally reviewing public education during the next two years, we obviously want to affect and influence that review. These conditions have led us to unite in the conclusion that we need to have a new long-term plan-a plan that will not only influence the Legislature's review of public education, but a plan that will also take from that review. Last year, the Board of Governors conducted several study sessions and engaged in other preparatory activities for this effort. During 2001, we will complete the review and assist the Board in developing and adopting the new long-term plan for the system.

Conclusion

As I conclude tonight, I want you to know that I don't expect each and every one of you to agree with every aspect of the nine points of unity that I've just described. After all, I'm just the Chancellor, and that's why we have the Consultation Process and the Board of Governors. What I do want to communicate is that each and every one of us in this system deeply cares about the success of our students. Each and every one of us has been laboring to the point of embattled exhaustion in resource-starved environments because we passionately believe in the mission of the community colleges. We all share the belief that our colleges play a pivotal role in the social and economic success of one of the most diverse places on Earth. We share a special kinship with our students; and, once we stop grinding on one another long enough, we've realized we share a special kinship with one another.

It is inconceivable that we could be anything other than the strongest of allies when it comes to caring about our students and delivering our mission. After all, our common passion is to nurture hope and human potential. We share similar backgrounds. And, we are mutually dependent upon one another in our efforts to provide excellent education. When it comes down to it, we really are in agreement about the values that motivate us to action. If we can commit to work with one another, if we can commit to

develop our relationships as colleagues, there is no problem or difference that we cannot resolve. And perhaps most important, our concerted action on this unity agenda will powerfully transform the quality of community college education in California.

It is a great privilege and honor to be your Chancellor. As a barefoot boy growing up in the little desert town of El Centro, I never dreamed I would be in this position. It has been the greatest adventure and the most noble cause of my life. I'm here because I believe in our students; I'm here because I believe in our mission; and I'm here because I believe in you. Deep down, I think we all know we're already united in our cause. It's the *commitment to unity* and the *commitment to develop our relationships as allies and colleagues* that is tomorrow's challenge. I think we're ready, and I think that, together, we're going to make this the best community college system on Earth.

Thank you, and good evening.